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# SACRED DANCE GUILD

# JOURNAL

Winter Issue (January) 1982-1983 Vol. XXV, No. 2

## Dear SDG Member,

By now you should have received, in a separate mailing, the Annotated Bibliography and the brochure for our Sacred Dance Guild Twenty-fifth Anniversary Festival. I urge you to send your pre-registration as soon as possible as space is already beginning to fill (20 registrants as of January 15)!! The scope of the workshop is EXCELLENT and the Berkeley campus and surrounding San Francisco Bay Area is an exciting experience in itself.

Send in your \$25.00 now to guarantee housing on campus and then start looking for specials on transportation to San Francisco. This gives you time to plan a way to raise the funds for the remainder of the tuition. Don't be afraid to ask local churches for scholarship help in return for sharing something you'll learn at the workshop.

Speaking of scholarship help----information concerning the Sacred Dance Guild scholarships will be coming out in the next interim mailing. Also coming in that mailing will be an order form for our good-looking Sacred Dance Guild t-shirts (profits go to scholarship fund), and the new SDG brochure. Watch for it!!

Doug Adams annotated the bibliography. We hope that this will enable you to find information on sacred dance more easily. Please feel free to share the bibliography with someone interested in sacred dance. We will be glad to send you an extra copy. Some of these books are "how to" books, others are designed to help you to be more articulate in expressing the history or use of sacred dance. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to be an "informed" sacred dancer!

In this Journal is a request for you to share your ideas. Most of us participated in, planned, or watched something involved in sacred dance during December. For example, I helped a congregation integrate Shaker dance and a movement meditation into their traditional Epiphany Soup Supper. If we collect ideas NOW we can assemble and publish them for you later in the year. Someone is at the same level of interest or experience that you are. Wouldn't YOU like to scan a collection of seasonal ideas to find some that sparked your own creativity? Great! Then please take a minute, right now, to find the spot in the Journal explaining more about this and write out your idea---a procession, choreography for a Christmas carol or other dance, an interesting piece of music or costume idea---be it simple, or technically advanced. THANKS.

Joan Sparrow (Massachusetts) sent this quote that certainly applies to dance as well:

When truly brothers/sisters  
We don't sing in unison  
But in harmony.

Happy 1983! Happy 25 Years to Us!

*Susan Cole*

President, SDG



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## Editorial -

The Spring Issue of the JOURNAL will center its focus on SHARING, sharing your ideas, form, content, or choreography on the seasons of Thanksgiving, Advent, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Epiphany.

A form could be made up, but probably your own presentation would be the easiest and quickest. Try to do this as quickly as possible before your ideas so well done recently fade away into time.

As you well know, the SDG is trying new ways of presently material to you to help in carrying on the art of worshipping through dance. And the sharing of ideas is one more way.

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25th  
Festival      Register  
August 1-5, 1983

# Berkeley, California

LETTERS      TO      THE      EDITOR

(The following is an example of many letters  
your editor receives:)

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"I would appreciate information on any upcoming events. I teach in many areas, with many ages and populations and find myself often being a resource person. At present I am teaching at the University of Maryland and a few of my students are interested in Sacred Dance...."

Pauline Fisher

'A Moving Experience', 1884 Columbia Road, N.W.,  
No. 105, Washington, D.C. 20009.

\*

"Please send me information about subscribing to your newsletter. I am interested in other publications you might also have."

Keith EW Gross

Ministry of Education and Worship. Alberta Conference,  
The United Church of Canada, 6911-48 Avenue,  
Edmonton, Alberta T6E 5V6.

\*

(The letter to follow pertains to an article printed in the Fall issue:)

October 21, 1982: "Thank you for printing my article in the Fall issue of Journal. However please note the following correction: the words 'would lose much of its richness and variety. Any new form of worship' was left out of paragraph 8, after the words 'Yet without them our worship...' Also, the word 'had' was inserted into the first line of paragraph 5, and I think it alters the meaning from what I had intended. Perhaps a note of these corrections could be made in the next issue.

"I was happy to see the new format of Journal, as it seems to give a more professional sense to it; I also like the idea of reading several articles in an issue, rather than so much news of what other people are doing. However, I was hoping to introduce myself to the Guild by way of my article, and because I did not know about the new format, my accompanying letter was not printed. I would like and I feel it would be appropriate to have some information printed about me in the Journal, so that readers would know something about the writer of the article....

"Janet Skidmore received a B.A. in dance education from the University of Illinois in 1979, and an M.A. in choreography from the Ohio State University in 1981. In her native Chicago area she has danced with Joseph Holmes Dance Theatre and the Chicago Moving Company. She is presently working with Meholt Dance Theater, the resident dance company of Night Light, A Christian Entertainment Alternative, in Chicago. Ms. Skidmore is interested in leading workshops in dance technique and choreography for sacred dance groups and can be contacted at 6812 N. Wayne, #408, Chicago, IL, 60626...."

Janet L. Skidmore

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(Ed. Note: Here is someone who has discovered SDG:)

Jan 2, 1983 "I recently chanced upon a resource guide for dance and interpretive movement prepared by the Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church. Mentioned on this list was the Sacred Dance Guild and the educational materials they dispense via their Guild Newsletter.

"As an elementary music teacher I am well versed in creative dance and movement in the classroom. However, I am most interested in

expanding this medium to include the worship service. I would greatly appreciate any information you might send concerning the Sacred Dance Guild, the Guild Newsletter, or the kit containing aids for dance choir directors.

"Thank you for your help. I will look forward to hearing from you..."

LuAnn Erbes  
437 Glenn Dr., Harbor Springs, MI 49740.

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(And another important note from Janet Skidmore:)

October 27, 1982: "Grace and peace from our Lord Jesus be to you!

"I have just finished reading the fall Journal, and thought I would take time out to write to you. I have been a member of the Guild for about eight years, and have appreciated it as a communication network for sacred dancers, as well as a source for much of the publication that is being done today.

"A question that I have had lately is whether or not the Sacred Dance Guild is becoming ingrown. By that I mean, that we seem to be reading only books that are written by other Guild members. The recommended books in the latest Journal are all books published by the Sharing Company. I have never seen the works of such prominent Christian writers as Frances and Edith Schaeffer, or C.S. Lewis, for example, mentioned. It seems to me that these writers have views on Christianity and the arts that we in the Guild ought to be familiar with. I have met a number of sacred dancers in the Chicago area, few of whom are members of the Guild...They generally know nothing about the books published by the Sharing Company, but are familiar with the Schaeffer/

Lewis school of thought, perhaps because many of them subscribed to Arkenstone and Motif Christian arts magazines, and these magazines have promoted books by the Schaeffers and Lewis. I think the Guild could be a valuable communication network for all of these different ideas, promoting a more well-rounded view of sacred dance as it fits into the whole of Christian art....."

Janet Skidmore

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\*\*    \*\*    \*\*    Recommended Reading    \*\*    \*\*    \*\*

1.

"Puppets in Worship," the August, 1982 issue of Modern Liturgy is available at \$3.00 plus \$1 for postage and handling from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 78768 2224.

Much movement is encouraged by these articles on using puppets in worship. The table of content shows the articles; and several of the articles describe how puppets increase movement in worship. Historic uses of puppets also are described as encouraging dance; for the giant street puppets used in worship were connected to the people processing and dancing with the puppets. Articles in this issue edited by Doug Adams include: "Puppets and Worship" by Michael Moynahan, "The Festival of Epiphany With Giant Magic Puppets" by Therese Mason, "Interrupter Puppets in Preaching" by Richard Zawistoski, "Puppets With Persons In Liturgy" by Dale Woodward, "Puppet Construction and Presentation for Liturgy" by Bobbie and Lynda Frohman. (Also included is an article on "Ritual Body Language.")

Reviewed by Doug Adams

2.

"Lay Involvement in Worship: Reformation Roots,"

the February 1983 issue of Modern Liturgy is available at \$3.00 plus \$1 for postage and handling from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 78768 2224. Several articles relate how to increase dance and movement by the people in worship and how to develop the dance and other arts out of how the people already move and act in their daily lives. Articles in this issue edited by Doug Adams include: "Cultivating Freedom and Reformation Roots in worship by Doug Adams, "Dancing In The Vernacular" by Doug Adams, "Drama and Mime Drawn from the People's Lives" by Michael Moynahan, "Orchestrating Lay Involvement in Worship" by Harold McSwain Jr., and "Let the Word be Heard" by Harriet Brose and Bill Jacobs (simple ways to help people link the drama of Scripture and their lives).

Reviewed by Doug Adams

3.

Dancing With Early Christians (by Constance Fisher) has just come off the presses in 1983. The 176-page book contains fifty photographs and thirty fully detailed choreographies bringing to life dances in step with early Christians of the first five centuries. The book is available at \$6.95 per copy plus \$1 for postage and handling from the Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 78768 2224. The following table of content from Dancing With Early Christians shows the significant scope of the book. (Full choreographies are noted by being capitalized.)

Chapter I THE LORD OF THE DANCE

The Nativity, MARY'S CANTICLE, ZACHARY'S CANTICLE, GLORY TO GOD, NUNC DIMITTIS;  
The Sermon on the Mount, THE BEATITUDES; The Entry Into Jerusalem, HOSANNA HALLELUJAH,  
THE KING OF GLORY; The Last Supper, JOY SHALL COME; The Resurrection, SING ALLELUIA, O SONS AND DAUGHTERS; The Day of Pentecost, THE SPIRIT

OF THE LORD; The Lord of the Dance.

**Chapter II THE LIVING SACRIFICE**

Greek and Jewish Rituals of Sacrifice;  
The New Testament Image of Sacrifice; The  
Lord's Supper, LORD HAVE MERCY, THE SANCTUS,  
AGNUS DEI, AGNUS DEI, SOUNDS OF THE EUCHAR-  
IST: Baptism: Initiation Into the Faith,  
GOD'S CHILD, COME TO ME NOW, O SPIRIT OF GOD;  
PASSED THROUGH THE WATERS.

**Chapter III DANCING WITH ANGELS**

The Heavenly Dance; The Gnostic Dance, LORD  
IS COME, THE HYMN OF JESUS, COME, HOLY GHOST,  
THE SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS, THE HYMN OF THE-  
KLA, THE RING DANCE OF THE BLESSED, THE PI-  
LOTA; The Divine Presence.

**Chapter IV THE CELEBRATION OF THE FAITH**

The Celebration of the Faithful; A Service  
of Baptism; A Celebration of Early Christ-  
ian Liturgy, SABBATH PRAYER, ISAIAH 12, GO  
NOW IN PEACE, THE LORD OF THE DANCE; Dance  
and Relatedness.

MUSIC. FOOTNOTES. BIBLIOGRAPHY. PRINTED  
MUSIC. RECORDINGS. INDEX.

4.

SELF-ESTEEM: THE NEW REFORMATION by Robert H.  
Schuller, World Books, Waco, Texas, 1982, \$8.95.

From the Author: "You and I share a strong ex-  
citing interest in watching Christ's church  
grow. It's been my joy to share tested con-  
cepts and principles for church growth during  
the past twelve years through the Robert Schu-  
ller Institute for Successful Church Leader-  
ship....

"It's not a book to be read lightly or skimmed!"

## 5.

I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH by David Watson  
 Published by Eerdman's. Chapter entitled  
 "Worship."

Contains a good analysis of worship; what it involves, why we do it, and what kinds of sacrifices it calls for. Within this framework, the author gives quite a favorable view of dance and its use in contemporary, as well as ancient, worship. David Watson is an Anglican charismatic.

review by Janet Skidmore, Chicago, Il.

## 6.

MOTIF, published bi-monthly by the Vineyard Arts Fellowship. Subscriptions \$10.00 per year, single copies \$2.00. Address subscriptions to: MOTIF, P.O. Box 7816, Atlanta, GA., 30309.

This is an excellent magazine, presenting a Biblical view of music, theatre, film, and visual arts as well as dance. It examines the role of the Christian artist in secular society and within the Church, confronting a variety of issues. The Vineyard Arts Fellowship's commitment is "to build and encourage structures which stimulate courageous, high quality artistic achievement to the glory of God." The November-December 1982 issue, in particular, contains an article about Atlanta Ballet dancers Rob and Eleanor Rogers, who are Christians.

review by Janet Skidmore, Chicago, Il.

25th  
 Festival August 1-5, 1983  
 Register Now!

25th  
Festival See Centerfold  
Aug. 15, '83

"BIT" REVIEWS

From Dance Magazine, December 1978, page 23:

"Editor's log by William Como....Sanctus, to David Fanshawe's African Sanctus, is an hour-long major ballet. Traveling through Africa and collecting recorded examples of native music, the composer, Fanshawe, had two main objectives regarding his score: 'to collect and preserve live recordings of ethnic music, and to fuse that music, which embraced both the Muslim and Christian religions, with his own setting of the Catholic Mass. African Sanctus is a composition which puts the Mass into a new perspective. It's like an African song.' In its choreographic form by Bruce Marks, the piece is in ten sections, each a part of the 'Ordinary' of the Catholic Mass joined with its taped African counterpart. With its set design by David K. Barber, costumes by Carlie Shurtliff, and the especially magnificent lighting by Greg Geilmann, Marks' Sanctus, as performed by Ballet West, is a theatrical explosion that is both innovative and moving...."

From Dance Magazine, June 1978 page 9:

"....Erik Bruh....will be dancing the role of the Moor in Limon's The Moor's Pavane (Purcell) at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, along with Choreographic Offering (Bach) and Missa Brevis (Kodaly). The program has been selected to take advantage of the cathedral's vast setting and its musical possibilities. The Cathedral Choir will be used in the Kodaly mass and the Cathedral's 8035-pipe organ will accompany both the mass and Choreographic Offering..."

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(Note from Ed.: The following report on a visit to the states is very interesting and gives a slant on "us":)

From Leaping 15, September 1982, Australia:

"U.S.A., San Diego Workshop by Mary Jones.  
"Before attending the conference we had been invited to lead a workshop in San Diego by Marie Chapian, Christian author, speaker and counsellor who runs a Health and Counselling Centre there. It showed me the possibilities of fitness classes with exercises to Christian music and verses of Scripture. Although we have done this in our dance classes, I think fitness classes would have a wider potential in the community. In the workshops we were able to share with them Worship (individual and group), Blessing the body, and experiencing how God can minister through our movement with another person or through objects of creation such as shells. After lunch we had a technique class and finished with some circle dances which were watched by a reporter who had come to write up the workshop for the city paper. It was a new and deep experience for those there for which we praise God.

Oakland Cathedral

"From San Diego we flew to Sacramento to meet up with Queensland Co-ordinator, Eileen MacDonald and her husband, Doug, who are staying for two months in Eileen's family home following her mother's death. The next day we drove down to San Francisco for a one-day workshop taught by Carolyn Deitering and Sister Rachel Fitzgerald. It was great to see Carolyn again and to have the experience of preparing prayers, responses and the gospel reading in movement for the following day at Oakland Cathedral. The gospel passage was on casting the demons from the epileptic boy (Mk 9) and the forty dancers were divided into prayers and masked demons. The music - simple, beautiful and often repeated with different words, was composed for the occasion and the congregation joined in enthusiastically with gestures led by Carolyn, Rachel and one of the priests to the responses and Lord's Prayer. It was moving to see the celebrants taking part robed but with bare feet.

Dance and Religion Conference

"I found it a most valuable experience being a participant at a dance conference with no organisational or teaching responsibilities. Eighty of us were kept busy from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. attending Worship with Dance, Technique, Classes, Panel discussions and Workshops. On two of the evenings Body and Soul Company (Judith Rock, Phil Potter, Berkeley) and the Omega Liturgical Dance Company (Carla da Sola, New York) gave exciting full-length presentations. The companies, each with four or five dancers have high technical and choreographic skills and are more oriented to performance than we are used to.

"The conference was helpful in receiving new ideas for work with congregations and Senior Citizens

from Doug Adams; in finding a different approach to improvisation as a faith experience with Cindy Winton-Henry (Body and Soul); in seeing a more relaxed way to warm up the body (Omega); and in experiencing how Carla da Sola worked with the concept of the Kingdom of God. Generally I was stretched and challenged in my thinking and vision.

"There were some people at the conference who found the liberal theological approach hard to handle and the Australian contingent made a small contribution in arranging a 7:30 a.m. meeting for sharing and prayer. We also enjoyed being able to talk a little about CDFA one lunch hour, to share our Australian dance and to sell some of our kangaroo T-shirts.

Throughout the country

"As well as the more professional companies we saw, there are many church groups, although probably no more in proportion to the population than we have. We met the President and many of the members of the Sacred Dance Guild which has around 500 members and is similar in function to CDFA although Interfaith rather than Christian.

"There are also organisations in New York and Boston for Christian Professional Artists similar to the Arts Centre Group, London, and Christian Artists New Zealand. The newly formed Christian Dancers Fellowship of America is being organised by Michael Job in Oak Ridge, Tennessee...."

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# SACRED DANCE GUILD

# JOURNAL

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Editor's Note: This issue of the JOURNAL will contain a series of articles instead of a central theme. Several will "prelude" the 25th anniversary of the Sacred Dance Guild celebration!

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## FIFTY YEARS OF SACRED DANCE by Margaret Fisk Taylor

(Margaret Fisk Taylor, S.D.G. member and one of the early liturgical dancers, choreographers, and authors, contributes this article in celebration of the 25th year.)

### FIFTY YEARS AGO

In this year of 1983 we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Sacred Dance Guild. Also in 1983 I will celebrate 50 continuous years of my involvement in Sacred Dance plus 75 years of living.

In my early background there was free creative dance at Punahou School in Honolulu, also creative dance at Oberlin College in Ohio where I choreographed my first religious dance for three students in 1930. While at Oberlin I saw programs by the Duncan Dancers and by Ruth St. Denis and

Ted Shawn. In 1931 I spent 3 months studying dance at the Mary Wigman School in Berlin, Germany. Her emphasis on strong, vigorous movement plus social concern in content gave me a vision of the potential of meaningful dance. In 1932 I studied dance at the University of Chicago under Marian Van Tuyl who had spent a year of dance under Martha Graham. I benefited from Marian's own emphases as well as her sharing of the Graham techniques. Also, as a member of Orchesis Club, I danced with 20 other students to Marian's choreography of "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" (Bach) in a vesper service in the University of Chicago's Rockefeller Chapel. I was impressed with the depth of devotional experience for all of us.

So, I decided to experiment with movement to Christmas carols in the Christmas Vesper in 1933 in the South Shore Community Church (Congregational/UCC) in Chicago where my husband was the minister. I had a group of 7 college age girls in the church. Fortunately for me the congregation was enthusiastic. Soon our enlarging group danced for Easter Services as well as Christmas. In 1936 I asked the deacons about a special vesper with movement to Holst, Gounod, etc. They said I could do anything I wanted as long as I didn't call it "dance"; so the service was entitled: "The Rhythmic Interpretation of Religious Music" and thus evolved the term "Rhythmic Choir" which I used for 20 years. About 15 years later I asked Ruth St. Denis when she had chosen the term "Rhythmic Choir" for her sacred dance choir and she said it had occurred to her early in the 30's! We were far apart and unaware of each other's terms for many years!

FIRST UNRELATED BURSTS OF DANCE IN CHURCHES  
A fascinating happening was the bursting forth of

isolated sacred dancers across our country! The creative experiments were due largely to modern dance with its freedom from stylized ballet technique, also the influence of both Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, and also the many active dance groups in colleges where dance was presented in chapel services. Each sacred dance leader explored in his/her own way with no knowledge of any one else in this field. William Norman Guthrie, the Rector at St. Marks in the Bowerie, N.Y. sponsored Vesper Services with Sacred Dance (1925-38). Some professional dancers were invited and some of the young women in his church danced occasionally. This caused a turmoil with the Episcopal Bishop. Erika Thimey presented sacred dance choirs for services largely in Unitarian Churches in Chicago (1932), Boston and New York. (Do read her story in the Fall Issue, 1982 of the Sacred Dance Guild Journal). In 1943 when I was living in Hanover, N.H. I heard of Rev. Robert Storer, pastor of a Unitarian Church in Mass. and I arranged to meet him. We were exhilarated to talk over what each of us had been doing! Mary Jane Wolbers, trained in Denishawn dance in H.S., danced in the Community Church connected with the University of New Hampshire in 1942. (She had heard of me, but we had no contact until 1957). Evelyn Broadbent in Chicago Theological Seminary in 1943 wrote her M.A. thesis on "Dance in Religious Education" and has continued ever since with her "Motion Choirs". Toni' Intravaia at the University of Michigan choreographed her first sacred dance in 1943 and has continued in this field. Dr. Howard Thurman in 1945 sponsored an active "Liturgical Dance Choir" in his inter-racial Church Fellowship of All Peoples in San Francisco. I didn't hear of his excellent choir until 1952.

I may have failed to mention other early leaders who also started sacred dance in churches without knowing of any one else. The time to dance in

churches must have arrived and we all answered that call individually and with dedication.

#### NEED TO SHARE IN THIS NEW CREATIVE FIELD

I gathered a group of 12 leaders for a 3 day retreat near Hartford, Conn. in 1949. That was a great time of sharing and was actually the first workshop for sacred dance leaders from Congregational, Unitarian, Baptist and Methodist Churches. Many groups were springing up throughout New England.

In 10 successive Annual Choir Festivals in Hanover, N.H. in the 1940's I had a fine group of H.S. girls and Dartmouth College men. Each time we would have 2 or 3 devotional dances and at least one dramatic dance selected from either the Bible (Prodigal Son, Ruth & Naomi, Job) or some social concern (True Freedom). I would try to attend two professional dance concerts each year and would take notes and make stick figure sketches to provide more material for my choreographies. Most memorable were Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, Jose Limon, Kurt Joos and Jean Erdman. We had a small touring group that spent 2 weeks each spring giving programs for churches, colleges, seminaries, and TV on the east coast from Maine to Virginia. Also there were many presentations throughout the years and many summer conferences. During those 12 years the Rhythmic Choir and I presented 200 programs. We usually included some information on the history of choral movement throughout the years of the Christian Church.

#### EFFORT TO INFORM AND ENCOURAGE ACTIVE CHOIRS THROUGH WRITING BOOKS

I started in 1940 to research the history of sacred dance in Christian Churches and this material became the main section of my first book: THE ART OF THE RHYTHMIC CHOIR published by Harper Bros. in 1950. Seventeen years later

I rewrote parts of it and then it appeared as A TIME TO DANCE published in 1967 by the United Church Press. And it appeared again with additional writing, published in 1977 by the Sharing Co. This was written to provide both active dance choirs and their congregations with background for more understanding.

I became aware of the need in both everyday living and personal devotional growth to use creative and symbolic movement - simple expressions that everybody could participate in. So I wrote LOOK UP AND LIVE which was published by Macalester Publishing Co., in 1953. Many of the described sequences were based on what I had offered in the Camps Farthest Out (interdenominational) as their leader for the daily "Rhythms" in which everyone participated no matter what age, shape or ability. These were basic dance exercises to release tension, to gain resiliency, to express joy and caring. They involved the interrelation of body, mind and soul. Later in 1977 this book was republished by the Sharing Company.

#### DANCE CHOIRS THROUGHOUT THE NATION REACH OUT TO ORGANIZE

Churches on the West Coast welcomed the use of sacred dance choirs. During my 6 years in Tacoma, Washington (1951-57) I continued with Annual Choir Festivals in the First Congregational Church, and throughout the west coast for many workshops, programs, conferences, TV programs, etc. - 350 altogether. One special workshop and vesper service was held in 1952 at the Oneonta Congregational Church in Pasadena, CA. It was sponsored by Helen Gray, the minister's wife, who had started with her Liturgical Dance Choir of young adult women in the middle 1940's, had Ruth St. Denis and myself as leaders. Constance Fisher, the minister's wife, played the organ for my Rhythmic Choir from Tacoma when we presented a Vesper Service in 1954 in her husband's Methodist

Church in Seattle. She became drawn to this form of worship and has become one of our valuable leaders.

In the Central States there were many active dance choirs in churches, especially in Michigan with Forrest Coggan as well as in Colorado where Martha Odom Yates was a leader. Also Illinois, Ohio, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The first organization was the Eastern Regional Sacred Dance Association because New England had the most choirs and many outstanding leaders: Mary Jane Wolbers, Robert Storer, Jane Renz, Ruth Rayton--just to name a few. In 1957 I attended their meeting at Jacobs Pillow in Lee, Mass. where both Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis were the main leaders. I shall never forget Ted Shawn's sharing with us his "Evolution of Prayer". He started with (1) primitive man crouching in fear of many evil gods around, above and below him; (2) the covenanting man who by following certain sacrifices and tabus could expect a covenant relationship that would insure him protection by his gods and enable him to straighten up. Then (3) the aspiring, searching man rising above the bartering stage with a spiraling, upward reach of mystic awareness. But that wasn't the climax for (4) with a downward spiral turn and an outward reach to all, man's prayer became a caring concern for fellow human beings everywhere. Shawn's dance testimony is even more meaningful today!

#### THE SACRED DANCE GUILD IS FORMED

In 1958 (twenty-five years ago) the Sacred Dance Guild was formed and we must credit Helen Gray and her husband in suggesting the term "Guild" - a gathering of individual artists drawn together by a common purpose of worshiping through the art of the dance. Carlynn Reed has written the history of the Sacred Dance Guild in AND WE HAVE

DANCED, Sharing Co., 1978. She has done an excellent job in gathering and organizing the bits and pieces of our activities.

The Sacred Dance Guild Newsletter/Journal has always been an integral part of our Guild. At first different leaders would edit one or two of the three issues each year, but this was found to be too disorganized. I became the editor from 1962 to 1966. What a tremendous job that was and how exciting with the gathering of news from all over the country from various religious groups. My greatest admiration goes to Toni' Intravaia for these last 14 years as she continues to be the news center for our ever changing officers and area representatives. The Sacred Dance Guild Journal is our "heart beat" of (1) articles and reviews, (2) announcements of future workshops, courses, and Festivals, and (3) reports of S.D. activities throughout our national membership as well as the annual listing of members.

I had the great honor of being president of S.D.G during 1968-69. But late in 1969 I went to live in Hawaii for four years; so I resigned and my vice-president Virginia Lucke carried on most effectively.

#### MORE BOOKS FOR GUIDELINES

For 16 years I had been encouraging dramatic dance with children. This was a different approach from work with a dance choir and it was a valuable vehicle in Christian Education. So, I settled down to write TIME FOR WONDER for children from 5 to 8 years of age. This was published by the United Church Press in 1961. Then in 1964 I wrote a companion volume, TIME FOR DISCOVERY, published also by U.C. Press, for children 9 to 12 years of age. These were "how-to" books to encourage all workers with children. Now these two books have been combined and reprinted by the

Sharing Company (1977) with the title: DRAMATIC DANCE WITH CHILDREN IN EDUCATION AND WORSHIP.

At the request of the National Council of Churches I wrote a study booklet, STEPS TOWARD RECONCILIATION in 1968. Its purpose was to enable people to become aware of conflicts, to feel them intensely with their whole being (not just intellectually), to experience empathy with those who feel hostile, resentful, frustrated, etc., and then gradually work out steps toward reconciliation between persons and groups. This led into ways of celebrating and rejoicing. A "how-to" book.

DOUG ADAMS AND THE MARGARET TAYLOR ENDOWMENT FOR DANCE AT PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

I met Doug Adams in 1968 when he was a student at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA. He was intrigued with the possibilities of the use of movement in worship services with the congregation involved; so at his invitation I came for a week and worked with the students in their daily chapel services. As you know, Doug has carried on in this field with his vigor, humor and dedication.

In 1977 Doug launched the Margaret Taylor Endowment for Dance at P.S.R. and this has continued to be an assisting source for developments in all phases of sacred dance. I have always felt the title of this endowment is too great an honor for me.

The reprinting of my various books was made possible through Doug and the Sharing Co. These books had become "out of print" and suddenly in 1977 it was as if I had 3 dancing grandchildren! Also at Doug's request I have contributed two chapters in DANCING CHRISTMAS CAROLS (1978) and a booklet for S.D.G. on CONSIDERATIONS FOR STARTING AND STRETCHING A SACRED DANCE CHOIR(1978).

MY CONCERNs TODAY

I still continue to keep active in this creative field. Over these 50 years I have presented over 1300 programs/workshops and written my books and many magazine articles. I rejoice that there are so many active and dedicated sacred dance leaders and choir members. What a feast I had in October, 1982 relishing the presentations of 20 different dancers and choirs at the Festival of S.D. sponsored by the Southern California Chapter. And what a warm response to my talk and in their participation with me!

I have concerns today about this important field:

(1) I hope for more people (congregational) involvement - more intergenerational participation in our churches and in our conferences. We need to explore more simple movements in circles, processions and even in the confinement of pews so that people may move and be moved to express worship with their whole being.

(2) I hope for more relating to others (like Shawn's climax in his "Evolution of Prayer"). Matthew Fox of Mundelein College writes in the Chicago Theological Seminary Register (Spring 1982): "Trancendence ... is no longer 'up'. ... Worship, spirituality, prayer need to be symbolized in a new way - emphasizing horizontality, interdependence, shared ecstacy." Our dance choirs should show more inter-relationship with each other in strong, expressive movements and with awareness of the people in the congregation.

(3) I hope for more content that deals with social concerns. Dancer Sarah Bentley, active in Riverside Church, N.Y. has written in the Christian Century (5/19/82): "Sacred dance should be a powerful discourse through which values, the commitments, the struggles and the dilemmas of a congregation are represented.... The reason to be brought alive on Sunday is to have increased energy on Monday." In the last 2 years I have led church congregations, conference groups, and the dancers at

the So. Calif. Sacred Dance Festival in movement to "God of Grace and God of Glory" (tune: Cwm Rhondda) with some of my adaptations of the words by Fosdick:

God of grace and God of glory  
 On your people pour your power;  
 Help us guard our human story  
 That its bud may grow to flower.  
 Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
 For the facing of this hour,  
 For the facing of this hour.

Lo, the hosts of evil 'round us  
 Scorn world peace, assail its ways;  
 Fears and doubts too long have bound us,  
 Free our hearts to solve this maze.  
 Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
 For the living of these days,  
 For the living of these days.

Save us from weak resignation  
 To the evils we deplore.  
 May the search for true salvation  
 Bring new hope as we explore.  
 Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
 Sharing with each other more,  
 Sharing with each other more.

We moved with intensity to express our agony, our searching and our concern with each other and for all people. Sometimes we improvised using the space in the aisles, chancel and before the chancel; sometimes we moved while in the pews. We were praying deeply with our whole being.

Sacred Dance is really a sacred trust for all of us in this age of uncertainty and disillusion. A great deal of modern dance is not struggling with communication of meaning. Historically, dance emerged (1) to express communal emotions, (2) to preserve ritual, and (3) to project pro-

phetic vision. It carried vivid symbolic meaning for people. In this age of confusion and potential disaster, although we are limited in offering solutions, we can use energy in our dances to share meaningful awareness of our Creator's power among us, strengthening us and bringing us resiliency as we grow in mutual caring and daring. This is not the time to dance only harmonious designs with gentle movements; it is a challenging time to launch out into stronger, dramatic dances as we face the living of these days.

--written by Margaret Taylor Doane for the  
Winter Issue of the S.D.G. Journal 1983--

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## GETTING TO KNOW THE PERFORMER WITHIN by Dr.

(This article is from the magazine On the Move Vol. 2 No. 3 Summer, 1982. Their purpose is "Onthemove provides a bridge for communication among dance artists on every skill level and in the specialized areas of education, performance, liturgy, and therapy.")

"One of the most interesting and challenging tasks I face as a dance educator is appraising students of the relationships between their personal motivations to dance and the act (or art) of performing. Those relationships are always more complex and delicate than students realize. The enthusiasm they initially carry into technique and composition classes converts to a bewildering mix of astonishment and excitement on the one hand and to self doubt and confusion on the other. Inevitably, as they gain new levels of awareness along with greater skill, their increased capacity for conceptualization of the 'human condition' exceeds their resources for communication and expression. The simple, ingenious outpouring of personal feelings that had been self-sufficient reason for dancing is suddenly inadequate to the responsibility of the performer to embody a metaphor in movement.

"I account for four kinds of personal motivation to perform. All four can be described in terms of self-realization: the child self, other self, wholeself, and abstract self. Most dancers begin their studies as a continuation of the child self. The dancer performs as the perpetual entertainer, the incorrigible ham, the kid who feels and 'expresses' public music and private moods with interchangeable abandon. Long live 'Singin' in the Rain!' This is a wholesome and genuine motivation, not to be summarily dismissed, but gently laid aside just as favorite old toys must be at last.

"Often the other self motivation emerges as the child self diminishes. In some instances the other self seems to be revealed, like a deep or latent being of the dancer, as the child self falls away. In other cases it seems to replace the 'lost' child. This is an especially delicate phase in the development of the dancer-cum-performer that requires two, three, perhaps four years of loving assurance but directness and honesty on the part of teachers. Problems with weight, sleeping, concentration, and personal identity -- the great 'who am I' is overrun by 'who do I want to be' -- frequently accompany the dancer's approaches to the other self: the pencil-thin technician, the exotic star performer, the brilliant interpreter of style, the servant of humanity, the insightful specialist....

"Whole self dancers are rather rare and not often encountered. They are seen, however, whenever professional tour companies come to town. These dancers seem to live on the stage or in the Green Room exclusively. They are 'born performers' -- but that does not necessarily mean they are the best performers. Those few whole self dancers who do enter college usually remain only a short time; but they, too, deserve honest advising -- even to leave school and to enter a professional career as soon as possible, and even before they are 'technically ready.'

"The abstract self motivation is most difficult to describe. It is, I think, never inborn but rather acquired. The dancer becomes fascinated with the exploration and expression of ideas. His or her private identity is either subsumed within the abstract self or is irrelevant to its processes. Each performed role is newly conceived and created. These performers very often become choreographers in the natural

course of their careers, and their distinct styles show both the intense personal evaluations that they have engaged in, usually alone, and the omni-referential rhythms and movement forms that they have discovered or devised for expression of ideas.

"The emerging, evolving relationships of these motivations are always unique to any individual dancer. Teaching and advising must have as much concern for the individual dancer's performerly motivations as with his or her progress through the syllabus -- and much more!"

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The following is an interesting article that appeared in Brotherhood, Volume XVI, Number 1 which is the official publication of the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods, 838 Fifth Ave., New York, NY.

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THE JEWISH DANCE MYSTIQUE by Evelyn Halper,  
Valley Stream, New York.

"If it is possible to ascribe a miracle to dance, one conceived out of a sense of desperation and one that helped to create a personal stairway to God, then the distinction, without reservation, belongs to the Chassidic movement.

"The masses of people, debilitated by the poverty of wretched, dull and futile lives were revitalized through the religious ritual of ecstatic dance and song.

"To witness this highest level of religious enthusiasm, my husband, a professor at Brooklyn College, held a meeting with his Chassidic students. He explained my research project and we became the recipients of various types of wedd-

ing invitations.

"Evident in all of them, was the mode of the male dancing; spontaneous, undisguised frenzy of joy, regardless of one's age.

"At one wedding, from the balcony where our children were seated, they were able to observe both sides of the wall that separated the men and women. One of my daughters ran down to tell me of the excitement on the men's side. Making myself as inconspicuous as possible, I saw the action.

"Dancing in the center of the floor was a short man with a very long beard. Oblivious to his surroundings, he embodied the true character of emotion and ecstasy of the Chassidic dance. He was not a young man, yet he danced effortlessly for the longest time, pausing only to place a wine bottle on top of his head. He stopped only when the musicians seemed to tire. He then passed his hat, soliciting donations and disappeared.

"When Jerome Robbins was choreographing the original Broadway production of 'Fiddler on the Roof,' he arranged for his dancers to watch a performance by Ackerman. He wanted them to vicariously experience the ephemeral act of supplication that was, at one and the same time, worship and artistry.

"To better understand how the Chassidic dance evolved into the truly authentic dance idiom of the Jewish people, it is necessary to understand that the bitter milieu of the 18C Jewish male seemed to rob him of his youth. The humble, common man aspired to join the ranks of the 'pious ones,' a distinction reserved only for the learned scholar. This luxury was an impossible dream!

"Impossible? From out of nowhere, it seemed, there appeared the Bal Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name), a recluse who had been studying in the Carpathian Mountains. He proclaimed that The Lord must be served with joy and pleasure and that prayer must be accompanied with physical ecstasy in song and in dance. He assured the people that what a man felt in his heart was much more important than what he had learned in in his head.

"To transcend this ugly world and enter the realm of the celestial heavens, the Chassid had several options: When he became part of a circle, he also became a link in a chain of equality. A circle has no beginning, no end, no front, no back and no leader. The close body contact enhanced a shared feeling of Brotherhood.

"The pattern of the dance usually followed the same routine. The mood was sad and subdued. The tempo was slow but as the music accelerated, the shuffling steps of their feet seemed to take on wings and an explosion of energy pervaded the dancers.

"In the beginning there was no formal music so that the Chassid had to dance to his own vocalization...to wordless tunes. Words were redundant and superfluous and could be a deterrent in attracting God's attention.

"But when the Chassid danced by himself, he could pursue his own line of improvisation. No longer would he be bound to the rigid forward and back staccato movements. He was now free to set in motion every fibre of his body.

"As his forearms came into play, his elbows reached out with rapid, choppy motions that formed various 'angular' configurations. This was symbolic of the Hebrew alphabet. Not being a dancer, he did what came naturally; he lifted

himself off the ground with stiff, fast, jerky leaps and jumps. Then, in harmony with his responsive body, his fingers snapped, his head turned skyward and like the prophets of old, his rapturous soul turned him into another man.

"In the secular, as well as the religious regimen of the Chassidic community, dance became an indispensable part of any gathering. Special dances of joy were created to welcome the Sabbath Queen and melancholy ones for her departure. Dancing would often interrupt the Sabbath meal. Specific holiday dances were formulated for the happy celebrations (Simchat Torah) and for the solemn occasions (Day of Atonement). They envisaged healing the sick through dance and optimistically hoped that it might even favorably mediate the mood of a tyrant. They also danced to memorialize the death of a revered person.

"Then there were the wedding dances! Thematically, they manifested a philosophical continuum of Jewish values and unintentionally evolved into a legacy for the Eastern European Jewish community.

"The Mitzvah Tanz acknowledged the bride's parting from the family. After each rhymed couplet that extolled the virtues of the newlyweds, the 'badchan' (jester) would invite members of the family to dance with the bride at the end of a handkerchief. The Patch Tanz was the bride's final renunciation of her single status. The Koilich Tanz was a way to wish the couple a bountiful cupboard and good fortune. As the bride and groom emerged, they were greeted by the oldest woman in the community, who, while dancing, held a twisted white bread and salt above her head. The Beggars Tanz was the couple's first act of charity. To demonstrate their compassion for

those less fortunate, the beggars were invited to dance and to share in the celebration.

"Every guest had an opportunity to participate in a Mazel Tov (good luck) dance. The Bubbe's Tanz (Granny's Dance) was her solo in honor of the newlyweds. The Kazatskies featured the oldest male relatives who showed off their resurgence of vigor. The Machutanim Tanz was exclusively for the in-laws. As a first lesson in matrimony the Broyges Tanz (angry dance) demonstrated that married life will have its ups and downs and that a quarrel must be followed with a kiss of reconciliation.

"The Bessem Tanz was a nonsense dance in which a broom became a stand-in for a horse and musket. Then there was the Sher and Bulger and the innumerable Freilachs (Merry Tunes/Dances).

"If the Chassidic, pietistic revival narrowed the gulf between the despairing, economically deprived and with those on the loftiest and most esteemed plane, it would have merited accolades solely on that achievement, but of special significance, was the manner in which the interchangeable role of dancer-worshipper, guided by intrinsic Chassidic elements, had the far reaching effect of, at one and the same time, liberating the dance and reaffirming man's innate desire to dance for emotional reasons.

"Is it any wonder then, that over the years, the distinctive Chassidic dialect has been a constant source of inspiration for choreographers in almost all of the dance disciplines?"

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The following article is by Jo Anne Combs. She is a doctoral student in Symbolic Anthropology

and Dance Ethnology at UCLA, and as president of the Southern California Chapter of the Sacred Dance Guild, directed the first Annual Sacred Dance Festival held October 23, 1982:

SPIRITUAL & CULTURAL EXPLORATION THROUGH DANCE  
by Jo Anne Combs from The L.A. Light Forum, Fall, 1982

"At the turn of the century, Isadora Duncan startled many Western Viewers by her unorthodox burst onto the dance scene in America and Europe with exhortations to all people, but especially to dancers, to tap one's inner resources of the solar plexis for performing expressive movement and for realizing a more cosmic spiritual expression of one's nature. Around 1926, in Paris, Malkovsky refused to allow his dancers to submit to the artificial restrictions imposed by ballet, and taught instead, that they must seek out their own natural inner rhythms which were impulses of the Divine working through them. About the same time, Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, working out of Hollywood and New York, were pioneering concepts of dance as sacred, spiritual expressions derived from the inspiration of travels and dance studies in Asia and the Near East. Such ideas were revolutionary to western perceptions of rationality which can be traced back to Aristotle and later, the Age of Reason--i.e. left-brain perceptions.

"To the people of Asia, Africa, Near East, Australia, and other Pacific Islands, and to Native Americans, and rare, intuitive western individuals, dance and movement have been acknowledged and used for centuries as vehicles to Divine energy, human transcendence, spiritual development and emotional, mental and physical health. Dance and movement can be a powerful way of integrating, synthesizing and expressing life and growth experiences.

"Furthermore, dance and movement systems throughout the world are also symbolic expressions of religions

and cultures and are, therefore, excellent ways to slip into cultural and religious perceptions, value constructs and understandings that appear different from our own.

"Southern California has become a virtual living United Nations with the large influx of newcomers from foreign countries especially within the last ten years..."

"With just a little courage and openness we can experience an amazing, exciting odyssey into our own sacred nature, and a new awareness of our bodies through movement experience. With dance and movement as our vehicles for learning, we can more clearly perceive the links between ourselves, the Divine and our own mental, emotional and physical health. Equally important, movement systems other than our own can help us to understand and establish connections between ourselves, other people and other cultural values....

"What better way to acquire cultural understanding of not only religious and philosophical frameworks, but also the inner, spiritual reality than through a 'right-brain' activity such as moving and dancing. By exploring another culture's rhythmic system we can begin to adopt that rhythm into our own rhythmic repertoire and thereby acquire some understanding about how that cultural group sees, lives and believes.

"Frequently, a big surprise that results from such exploration is the discovery that all enduring religions seek truth, urge loving attitudes and behaviors, and serve to help people grow and evolve into more responsible, more caring, more self-affirming and consciously enlightened souls. In expanding our rhythmic repertoire, we allow ourselves to experience more fully a oneness with our fellowmen, a oneness that helps us identify our own inner sacredness as a beautiful manifestation of a greater, pervading, more universal, moving divinity that exists in all things."

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